2:Métraux E-5 (1929) 1948 SF10 Chiriguano SF10

Chane SF8

Chieftainship was inherited in the male line, but the title was bestowed on a chief's son only if he were worthy of it. There are only a very few cases of women ruling a *Chiriguano* group, but the *Chané* remembered the names of several women leaders. According to a genealogy of a *Chané* chiefly family recorded by Nordenskiöld (1912, p. 229), power was inherited successively by the brothers and sisters of a deceased chief before it passed to his son. In the village visited by Nordenskiöld, the brother's son of the chieftainess was the actual ruler, but her son by a commoner was the heir apparent. This system of succession is probably the same as the one prevailing among the eastern *Chané* (*Guana*).

Chiriguano chiefs of the past wore conspicuous ornaments and were entitled to carry the yanduwa, a pole with a bunch of feathers tied at the end, and a carved stick.

Property.—A plot that had once been cultivated by a man belonged to him and to his descendants, but could not be alienated by him. In order to insure new ownership rights, a *Chiriguano* would plant a few pumpkins on the land which he intended to clear.

Justice.—Thieves were expelled from the community or sometimes were flogged. A man convicted of adultery could lose his property. Murderers were sent into exile unless the victim's family had time to kill him first. Wronged individuals often took justice into their own hands and challenged the offender to a duel. The settlement of old accounts occurred generally during drinking bouts.

LIFE CYCLE

Childbirth.—Soon after childbirth, the mother went to the river to wash and smear herself with urucú. Both parents observed various food taboos. The father rested for a few days on his bed and refrained from any work, lest he harm the baby. One twin, as well as any malformed infant, was killed (Campana, 1902, p. 72).

Puberty.—Menstrual flow was attributed to the bite of a mysterious serpent. At her first menses a girl was hoisted in her hammock to the roof of the hut, where she was compelled to stay for 5 days without uttering a word. Then she remained for a month or more enclosed in a corner of the hut. Her hair was clipped short, and she was put on a diet of boiled maize. During her seclusion, she spun and wove wool and cotton so that she would be diligent for the rest of her life. Meanwhile, she became pallid, which was greatly admired when she returned to normal life. Henceforth, she used the affirmative "é, é" instead of the childish "ú, ú."

In ancient times, the confinement of a pubescent girl lasted for several months or even for a year[1] (Campana, 1902, p. 86).

[1] According to Father Chomé (1819 b, p. 202), the pubescent girl was hoisted in her hammock near the roof. During the second month, the hammock was lowered, but the confinement ended only in the third month, when a group of old women entered the hut with sticks to start a symbolic hunt for the serpent that had bitten the girl.

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853 262 There is no special food or more abundant food for mothers after childbirth. She who gives her breasts to her little one eats little and extremely poorly. Her ordinary food is parched maize, parched maize meal, bread made of the same, herbs, beans, gourds, other things of this nature, and rarely a little purchased beef, other meat from animals that died from sickness, lack of pasture, or snake bite, and, finally, game or chicken. In spite of this extremely bad food, milk is abundant in her breasts; the children are almost always hanging from them and sucking and never seem to dry them up, which indicates that they are excellent nursers.

648 464 853 Mestizo or white mothers who sometimes have little or no breast milk because of sickness or some accident make contracts with Chiriguano mothers, pay them well, and treat them better, but it seems that continued good and satisfactory nursing harms them, /212/ it also being prejudicial to the breast as well as to both newborn babies, the weaker child succumbing first (1).

1. Naturally the Chiriguano women refuse to be wet nurses for white children, because they abhor them. When through experience they learn of the sad consequences, communicated by others, they resist even more and only do it when force or the right of the stronger prevails.

Twins

● 845 [163] [165] Multiple births are rare, and those of two children are frequent. In the former case the newborn babies die very soon, and in the latter case one almost always lives, and many times 736 603 both live. When twins survive or through the death of the mother a newborn child is left an orphan, it is very easy for the grandmother to care for one twin or the orphaned child. [853] [824] Although the old woman may have reached or passed 60, she

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753 had asked for her as his wife, a proposal which had not been
754 accepted; but it must be noted that the Indians attribute every death to sorcery.

765 The loss of this child was greatly mourned by relatives
[764] and others, and her parents, who loved her very much, burned all of the clothes and things that she had, in addition to having buried with her the best and abundant clothing which her father had just brought her from the Argentine Republic. The girl had three donkeys which had been given to her by her father. They sold them in order not to see them any more, in order not to be reminded of their late daughter each moment and immediately weep.

855 I have related this event so that my readers may know
765 that the Chiriguano love their children whether male or female, so that they may see the grief they feel, and so that they may know that in case of hydrophobia the medicine which I administered to the girls Ana and Delina is a good remedy; after the last fever they are now completely well (1).

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1. If some new missionary or other readers may not know of it, let them now know that ammonia drunk as drops in water and placed on snake bites and bites of other poisonous animals or insects is very efficacious. In ignorance of having been bitten by a spider, I suffered the consequences for seven months and got well as soon as I applied ammonia to it. For another bite I used ink very efficaciously; it is enough to paint the bitten part with it.

●845 Deformed Children
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732 It is not easy to ascertain why the Chiriguano kill their children who are born deformed. Some writers have stated that they do it so that all will be valiant warriors, but this reason is not satisfactory because deformed women are not found either, and certainly women are not good for war.

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845 847 732 I judge that they take away the lives of these unfortunates, not to do them harm, but to do a highly philanthropic act for them, since they would have even greater suffering were they to be left blind, crippled, lame, one-handed, mute, and deaf for the rest of their lives (2).

[191] [734]

2. Similar philanthropic acts are still practiced among the Toba and other tribes; so that they will not suffer much and long, they also bury sick persons alive.

732 Today one sees an occasional deformed person, and these isolated cases are either due to parents not brave enough to kill /215/ their children or perhaps they can be attributed to illnesses contracted at an advanced age. As a conclusion to 181 the present chapter, let it be noted that some have written things about which they know nothing, making the Chiriguano out to be ferocious wild animals without compassion, but a particular fact cannot be used to draw general conclusions. True explorers state, as I do, that in general the Chiriguano is humanitarian; he loves his relatives in life and in death, and they are astounded by the conduct of the whites, who upon the death of their relatives slaughter cattle, drink brandy, and play as if it were a fiesta (1).

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1. The conduct of certain civilized persons should not be reproved by the world. Even in the most civilized nations there are benefit dances. They drink, dance, and do other things, while the poor or the sick suffer. The Catholic takes out his money and gives it away in secret, without ever bragging about it; this is the true way to help humanity.